



The 103rd meeting of the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council was held on Friday 22 December 2017 at 9.30am, at 99 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.

Present: Mike Cantlay (Chair)
John Kemp (Interim Chief Executive)
David Alexander
Mhairi Harrington
Professor Maggie Kinloch (items 17/137 to 17/149)
Douglas Mundie
Dr Veena O'Halloran
Caroline Stuart (by teleconference)
Professor Lesley Yellowlees

Officers: Michael Cross
Martin Fairbairn (Secretary)
Dr Stuart Fancey
Richard Hancock (items 17/143 to 17/144)
Martin Kirkwood (items 17/146 to 17/148)
Keith McDonald (items 17/146 to 17/149)
Sheila Meehan (Clerk)
Martin Smith
Angela Seymour (items 17/137 to 17/145)
Virginia Elliott

**Scottish
Government:** Paul Smart

Observers: David Sweeney (HEFCE)
Luke Humberstone (NUS (Scotland))

Apologies: Paul Little
Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli
Dr Keith Nicholson
Marlene Wood
Dr David Blaney (HEFCW)
Jenni Fairbairn

17/137 Welcome

The Chair welcomed David Sweeney of HEFCE, Luke Humberstone of NUS (Scotland) and Paul Smart of the Scottish Government to the meeting.

17/138 Chair's business: papers for discussion and declarations of interest

The Chair invited members to indicate if they wished to discuss any of the starred items on the agenda. No papers were unstarred for discussion.

The Chair reminded Council members of their responsibility to indicate if they have, or may be perceived to have, a conflict of interest under any item.

The following members noted potential conflicts of interest:

- Douglas Mundie, in relation to the Institute of Directors, item 1.2.
- Mhairi Harrington, in relation to West Lothian College.
- Veena O'Halloran, for items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.
- David Alexander for items 5, 7, 8 and 9 (references to national bargaining and West College Scotland).

17/139 Minutes of the 9 November 2017 meeting (SFC/17/Min07)

The minute of the 9 November 2017 meeting was confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

17/140 Action tracker (SFC/17/98)

The Council received an update on the actions from the last meeting of the Board and noted progress on those actions.

The following paragraph is withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

[] × 1 paragraph

17/141 Chair's report (SFC/17/97)

The Council received and noted a paper providing a report from the Chair on his recent external engagements.

The following two paragraphs are withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

[] x 2 paragraphs

17/142 Long-term agenda planning (SFC/17/99)

The Council received a paper informing members of substantive agenda items proposed for future meetings.

The Council **agreed** that:

- An item on the interaction of SFC with the Strategic Board be added to the agenda for the November Council meeting.
- An item on the impact of Brexit be added to the agenda for the September Council meeting.

The following two paragraphs are withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

[] x 2 paragraphs

17/143 Development of SFC's Strategic Plan 2018-2023 (SFC/17/100)

The Council received a paper providing the proposals for developing SFC's next Strategic Plan.

The following three paragraphs are withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

[] x 3 paragraphs

The Council **approved** the process for the development of the new strategic plan.

17/144 SFC's Strategic Plan Performance Report update (SFC/17/101)

The Council received an update on SFC's Strategic Plan Performance Report.

The following two paragraphs are withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

[] x 2 paragraphs

The Council **agreed** with the Interim Chief Executive's assessment that progress was on track.

17/145 Chief Executive's report (SFC/17/102)

The Council received and noted a paper providing a report from the Interim Chief Executive on matters of current interest.

The following three paragraphs are withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

[] x 3 paragraphs

17/146 Draft Budget Announcement (SFC/17/103)

The Council received a paper setting out Scotland's Spending Plans and Draft Budget for FE and HE programme funds and SFC running cost budget for financial year (FY) 2018-19, as announced on 14 December 2017.

The following paragraph is withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

[] x 1 paragraph

17/147 Outcome agreements 2017-18 and 2018-19: progress update (SFC/17/104)

The Council received a paper advising on (a) progress with negotiating the 2018-19 outcome agreements against the background of Scottish Ministers' expectations of an intensified approach; and (b) an interim assessment of progress with the delivery of previous outcome agreements.

The following three paragraphs are withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 27: Information intended for future publication.

[] × 3 paragraphs

17/148 Infrastructure Framework Update (SFC/17/105)

The Council received a paper providing a policy framework for the Council's work around supporting the sectors' capital infrastructure needs.

The following three paragraphs are withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 27: Information intended for future publication.

[] × 3 paragraphs

17/149 Innovation Centre programme: phase-two (SFC/17/106)

The Council received a paper updating on progress with the multi-agency phase-two appraisal process for recommending future investment in Scotland's Innovation Centres.

The following two paragraphs are withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs.

[] × 2 paragraphs

Veena O'Halloran temporarily left the meeting.

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[] × 3 paragraphs

Veena O'Halloran returned to the meeting.

17/150 Use of delegated authority (SFC/17/107)

The Council received a paper reporting on the Interim Chief Executive's use of delegated authority during the period 1 September 2017 until 30 November 2017.

17/151 Access and Inclusion Committee minutes (SFC/17/108)

The Council received the unconfirmed minutes of the Access and Inclusion Committee meeting of 21 November 2017.

17/152 Finance Committee minutes (SFC/17/109)

The Council received the unconfirmed minutes of the Finance Compliance Committee meeting of 28 November 2017.

17/153 SFC Board meeting dates for 2019 (SFC/17/110)

The Council received a paper providing the SFC Board meeting dates for 2019 and **agreed** that further consideration be given to the future meeting schedule.

17/154 Update from observers (Oral)

The Council received updates from the observers present, David Sweeney and Luke Humberstone.

David Sweeney, Executive Chair Designate of Research England, confirmed that he was engaging with the Council executive on a wide range of issues where the four UK funding bodies had aligned

research policy or funding delivery interests.

The Council then received an update from Luke Humberstone, on the main focus for NUS (Scotland) following the budget, including students' mental health, bursaries and an increased loan threshold.

17/155 **Next meeting:** 1 February 2018